

# VSA

Visitor Studies Association

Fostering  
Transparency,  
Strengthening  
Public Trust

## 31st Annual Visitor Studies Association Conference

July 18–21  
2018  
CHICAGO  
ILLINOIS



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# Museum Studies

## ONLINE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Northwestern's Museum Studies certificate program crosses academic and professional boundaries as theory and practical experience come together in a curriculum that prepares participants for careers in administration and preservation. Public and private museums, arboretums, scientific institutions, government agencies, historical societies, national park sites, and preservation centers are just some of the places where museum studies backgrounds are most in demand.

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## SCHEDULE @ A GLANCE

### Tuesday, July 17, 2018

4:30pm - 6:30pm Registration Open

### Wednesday, July 18, 2018

8:00am - 4:00pm Registration Open  
 8:30am - 4:30pm VSA Board of Directors Meeting  
 9:00am - 4:00pm Pre-Conference Workshops  
 6:00pm - 8:00pm DVR FIG Slide Clinic

### Thursday, July 19, 2018

8:00am - 4:00pm Registration Open  
 8:00am - 5:00pm Silent Auction  
 8:00am - 9:00am Attendee Breakfast  
 9:00am - 10:30am VSA & AMM Opening Plenary & Keynote  
 10:30am-10:45am Coffee Break  
 10:45am - 12:00pm Concurrent Sessions  
 12:15pm - 1:30pm VSA FIG Lunches  
 1:45pm - 3:00pm Concurrent Sessions  
 3:00pm - 5:00pm Exhibit Hall Cocktail Reception & Poster Sessions  
 5:30pm - 7:30pm Get to Know VSA Happy Hour  
 7:00pm - 9:00pm Dining Discussions

### Friday, July 20, 2018

7:00am - 5:00pm Exhibit Hall Open  
 7:30am - 4:00pm Registration Open  
 7:30am - 8:30am Coffee Service  
 8:00am - 3:00pm Silent Auction  
 8:00am - 8:45am VSA Membership Meeting  
 9:00am - 10:00am VSA Plenary Speaker  
 10:00am - 10:15am Coffee Break  
 10:15am - 11:30am Concurrent Sessions  
 12:00pm - 1:15pm VSA Committee Meetings  
 1:45pm - 3:00pm Concurrent Sessions  
 3:00pm - 4:00pm Exhibit Hall Coffee Break  
 4:00pm - 5:15pm Concurrent Sessions  
 6:00pm - 9:00pm VSA & AMM Evening Event: Field Museum

### Saturday, July 21, 2018

8:00am - 9:30am VSA Closing Plenary & Breakfast  
 9:45am - 11:00am Concurrent Sessions  
 11:15am - 12:30pm Concurrent Sessions

VSA Registration table will be located in the Lower Level Foyer. Stop by with any questions!



## PROGRAM CO-CHAIR WELCOME LETTER

### Dear Attendees:

Welcome to Chicago for the 31st Annual Conference of the Visitor Studies Association! As always, we are excited to offer many opportunities to discuss new findings, discover new methods, and explore how social and technological shifts may affect the nature of our work through speakers, workshops, and sessions. This year, we are also pleased to extend these opportunities by partnering with the Association of Midwest Museums in a special joint conference that will bring together professionals from a wide variety of roles in the field of informal learning.

### Fostering Transparency, Strengthening Public Trust

This year's conference theme responds to the opportunity and need for informal learning institutions and professionals to consider our positions in relation to public trust. Over the next several days, participants will consider ways to maintain transparency, to foster dialogue with the communities we serve, and to ensure that we engage with those communities authentically and responsibly. At the same time, we hope that sessions will push us all to interrogate the ways in which and the extent to which our field's choices about collection, interpretation, collaboration, and governance have earned--or jeopardized--the trust of many diverse publics.

For this year's conference, AMM and VSA invite our respective memberships to work together to answer critical questions about how, across a range of accountabilities and circumstances, we can fulfill our institutional missions with renewed perspective, rigor, and courage.

### Our Host City

Welcome to the Windy City! A tourist mecca, Chicago is home to many iconic landmarks, world class cultural institutions, and a beautiful expansive Lakefront. Just outside the hotel doors, you can visit the Art Institute, Millennium Park, famously known for "the bean," and Grant Park, referred to as "Chicago's Front Yard" and home to Buckingham Fountain. Head south from the hotel to visit Museum Campus, where you can find three of Chicago's most visited museums: Adler Planetarium, The Field Museum, and Shedd Aquarium. And, don't forget to grab yourself a slice of deep dish pizza or a Chicago-style hot dog - no ketchup, of course!

As you can see from a quick ride on the "L" or the subway, it is within Chicago's 77 diverse neighborhoods where the city truly shines. These amazing communities are home to some of the most charming restaurants and cultural museums Chicago has to offer. Our host hotel is located in the South Loop, so just a quick trip south and west will take you to Chinatown, Pilsen, and University Village, home to the University of Illinois at Chicago. To the north you'll find some of Chicago's liveliest neighborhoods, including Ukrainian Village, Wicker Park, and Logan Square. We hope that you'll explore these hidden gems while you're here.

In addition to this year's evening event at the Field Museum, we hope you will consider participating in a Dining Discussion, attending a Fireside Chat, or joining a FIG. Consult this program or the registration table for information about these opportunities.

We hope you learn, interact with others, enjoy Chicago, and leave inspired. We also invite you to share your thoughts and suggestions with us, as we have already started planning for the 2019 conference.

With warmest regards,

Your Program Co-Chairs  
Lindsay Maldonado and Dolly Hayde



## 2018 Conference Planning Committee

Jason Allen, <b>April Award &amp; Student Scholarships</b>	Michelle Lentzner, <b>Abstracts Editor</b>
Staci Bennett, <b>April Award &amp; Student Scholarships</b>	Anna Lopez, <b>Workshops Co-Chair</b>
Ilana Bruton, <b>Dining Discussions</b>	Lindsay Maldonado, <b>Program Co-Chair</b>
Allison Cosby, <b>Fireside Chats</b>	Julia Miller, <b>Workshops Co-Chair</b>
Sara Davis, <b>Happy Hour</b>	Nicole Rivera, <b>Poster Session</b>
Donna DiBartolomeo, <b>Workshops Co-Chair</b>	Nicole Singleton, <b>Executive Director</b>
Josh Gutwill, <b>Green Team Chair</b>	Claire Thoma Emmons, <b>Conference Planning Committee Chair</b>
Taline Kuyumjian, <b>April Award &amp; Student Scholarships Chair</b>	Lauren Wilson, <b>April Award &amp; Student Scholarships</b>
Dolly Hayde, <b>Program Co-Chair</b>	Stephanie Ehlerding, <b>Membership &amp; Marketing Specialist</b>

## 2018 Session Proposal Reviewers

Jason Allen	Allison Cosby	Heidi Kartchner	Hannah Ridenour	Caitlin Tracey-Miller
Stephen Ashton	Rita Deedrick	Taline Kuyumjian	Nicole Rivera	Lisa Trahan
Marcie Benne	Donna DiBartolomeo	Catherine Lemmi	Brooke Rosenblatt	Laureen Trainer
Nadya Bennett	Jeremy Foutz	Michelle Lentzner	Camellia Sanford-Dolly	Maia Werner-Avidon
Staci Bennett	Susan Foutz	Anna Lopez	Cat Scharon	Erin Wilcox
Jennifer Benoit-Bryan	Juli Goss	Jerry Luebke	Beverly Serrell	Lauren Wilson
Marta Beyer	Josh Gutwill	Lindsay Maldonado	Cathy Sigmond	Kari Williams
Sarah Brenkert	Dolly Hayde	Jennifer Matiassek	Brian Slattery	Mary Ann Wojton
Ilana Bruton	Elaine Horr	Kerry Morgan	Madeline Smith	Renae Youngs
Chris Cadenhead	Elisa Israel	Amy Niedbalski	Claire Thoma Emmons	

## 2018 Pre-Conference Workshop Proposal Reviewers

Jennifer Benoit-Bryan	Allison Cosby	Anna Lopez	Nette Pletcher	Maia Werner-Avidon
Sarah Brenkert	Donna DiBartolomeo	Julia Miller	Beverly Serrell	
Chris Cadenhead	Heidi Kartchner	Theano Moussouri	Lisa Trahan	

## 2018 April Award & Student Scholarship Applications Reviewers

Jason Allen	Allison Cosby	Michelle Lentzner	Caitlin Tracey-Miller
Staci Bennett	Dolly Hayde	Jill Stein	Lauren Wilson
Ilana Bruton	Taline Kuyumjian	Claire Thoma Emmons	

## The VSA Board of Directors 2017 - 2019

### Officers

<b>President</b> - Rae Ostman	<b>Secretary</b> - Michelle Maghari
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<b>Vice President, Professional Development</b> - Camellia Sanford-Dolly	<b>Immediate Past-President</b> - Kimberlee Kiehl
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<b>Vice President, Organizational Development</b> - Margaret Glass	<b>Chair, Conference Planning Committee</b> - Claire Thoma Emmons
	<b>Chair, Membership</b> - Patience Baach

### Members at Large

Josh Gutwill	Paul Martin	Jill Stein	Elee Wood
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## Conference Planning Committee

**Chair:**  
Claire Thoma Emmons

**Interim Chair:**  
Dolly Hayde

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Jason Allen, Staci Bennett, Ilana Bruton, Allison Cosbey, Sara Davis, Donna DiBartolomeo, Josh Gutwill, Taline Kuyumjian, Michelle Lentzner, Anna Lopez, Lindsay Maldonado, Julia Miller, Nicole Rivera, Lauren Wilson

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**Members:**  
Catherine Scharon, Patience Baach, Patricia Montano, Renae Youngs, Deborah Wasserman, Valerie Grabski, Heidi Kartchner, Sena Dawes

## Editorial Board

**Visitor Studies Journal Co-Editors:**  
Karen Knutson, Kevin Crowley

**Members:**  
David Anderson, Stephen Bitgood, Elizabeth Bolander, Gregory Braswell, Christopher Cardiel, Regan Forrest, Alice Fu, Jan Packer, James Kiesel, Scott Pattison, Theopisti Stylianou-Lambert, Beverly Serrell, Nick Visscher

## Development Committee

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Lynn Courtney

**Members:**  
Laura Huerta Migus, Margaret Glass, Kimberlee Kiehl, Paul Martin

## Focused Interest Group (FIG) Leaders

**Bridging Communities:**  
Lisa Newton and Patty Montano

**Data Visualization and Reporting:**  
Kate Livingston and Lauren Wilson

**Zoo and Aquarium:**  
Nadya Bennett

**Internal Evaluation Managers:**  
Ly Foor

**Art Museums:**  
Hannah Ridenour and  
Laura Brown

## Green Team

**Chair:**  
Josh Gutwill

**Members:**  
Ryan Auster, Katie Boyd, Sara Davis, Michelle Kenner, Meghan Kroning, Sarah May, Sasha Palmquist, Kaleen Tison Pavis, Rebekah Sobel

This year, VSA is beginning a process of “going green” -- working together to reduce the environmental impact of our conference. We have two main strategies: Encouraging Green Actions and experimenting with digital methods for bringing at-home attendees to the conference virtually. *Please consider assisting in our goals!*

## VSA AWARDS/SCHOLARSHIPS

### April Award Recipient

Each year, one promising new professional in audience research and evaluation is selected to attend the annual VSA Conference. The April Award recognizes the selected individual as an emerging leader showing promise in the field.



Suma Mallavarapu

#### **Suma Mallavarapu**

*Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Kennesaw State University, Georgia*

► Suma Mallavarapu is an Associate Professor of Psychology at Kennesaw State University. Suma was selected to be the 2018 April Award recipient because she has an immense interest

in growing and contributing to the field of visitor studies. She looks at the field through a research lens, focusing on zoo visitor behavior and the impact of conservation education displays on conservation knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors. When you see her in Chicago, ask her about finding ways to achieve long-term pro-conservation behavior change in zoo and aquarium visitors. Outside of work, she's interested in discussing favorite fiction books, biking, and hiking.

### Student Scholarships

The Visitor Studies Association Student Scholarship program promotes student participation in the VSA conference, where students may meet and interact with a diverse and supportive community of visitor studies professionals.



Lauren Scharf

#### **Lauren Scharf**

*Master of Arts in Museum Communication, University of the Arts, Philadelphia*

► Lauren Scharf is a Museum Communication graduate student at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. Lauren

was selected to be a 2018 student scholar recipient because she demonstrated a passion for visitor studies, specifically related to her thesis topic on audience segmentation and visit motives. Be sure to say hello to her in Chicago and talk to her about efforts at your institution to break down barriers for new or underserved audiences.



Kristen Valenti

#### **Kristen Valenti**

*Master of Arts in Museum Education, Tufts University, Massachusetts*

► Kristen Valenti is a Museum Education graduate student at Tufts University. Kristen was selected to receive a

2018 student scholarship because of her enthusiasm for helping informal education spaces maintain a culturally responsive, visitor-centered focus. Seek her out in Chicago and ask about her background in anthropology and archaeology; she is interested in meeting fellow visitor studies professionals.

#### **Catherine Wood**

*Master of Arts in Museology, University of Washington, Washington*

► Catherine Wood is a recent graduate from the University of Washington's Museology MA program. Catherine was selected to receive a 2018 student scholarship because

she displayed a commitment to creating more inclusive informal learning spaces through audience research and evaluation. Her master's thesis explored visitors' trust in museums that address contemporary social issues. Find her in Chicago and talk with her about your favorite podcasts - she's always looking for new recommendations!

### Outstanding Paper Award

**Josh Gutwill** and **Toni Dancstep** have been awarded the 2018 Chandler Screven Memorial - VSA Outstanding Paper Award for papers published in Visitor Studies during

2017, for their article *Boosting Metacognition in Science Museums: Simple Exhibit Label Designs to Enhance Learning*, published in Volume 20 No. 1.

## CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS



PHOTO: EMMA MARSTON



PHOTO: EMMA MARSTON

Wednesday, July 18, 2018

### Workshop Registration Rates

#### Full Day

\$150 Member

\$180 Non-Member

\$125 Student Member

#### Half Day

\$75 Member

\$90 Non-Member

\$65 Student Member

### Evaluator Competencies for Professional Development

- **Competency A:** Principles and Practices of Visitor Studies
- **Competency B:** Principles and Practices of Informal Learning Environments
- **Competency C:** Knowledge of and Practices with Social Science Research, Evaluation Methods and Analysis
- **Competency D:** Business Practices, Project Planning, and Resource Management
- **Competency E:** Professional Commitment

### **Full Day Workshops (9:00am - 4:00pm)**

#### Analyzing Data from Visual Artwork: Learning a New Method

*Donna DiBartolomeo*, Independent Consultant  
and *Zachary Clark*, 826DC

Competency: **C**

Salon A-1

#### Usability in the Museum: How to Evaluate Digital Interfaces

*Kathi Kaiser*, Centralis

Competency: **C**

Salon A-2

#### Hands On!

#### Designing Activities to Inspire Group Planning and Data Generation

*Lynn Courtney*, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston  
and *Paula Lynn*, National Gallery of Art

Competency: **A B C**

Salon A-3

#### No Money for an Evaluator?

#### Don't Despair!

#### Building Evaluation Confidence

*Elaine Horr*, COSI

Competency: **C**

Salon A-4



## CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS



PHOTO: EMMA MARSTON



PHOTO: EMMA MARSTON

Wednesday, July 18, 2018

### Morning Workshops (9:00am - 12:00pm)

**Making Sense of Visitor Studies Statistics: Part 1 - A Beginner's Framework for Understanding, Interpreting Statistics**  
*Deborah Wasserman and Mary Ann Wojton*,  
 Lifelong Learning Group at COSI's Center for Research and Evaluation  
 Competency: **C**  
**Salon C-1**

**Building Your Data Practices: Part 1 - Tools for Analyzing & Interpreting Your Data**  
*Jen Benoit-Bryan and Katherine Gean*,  
 Slover Linett Audience Research  
 Competency: **C**  
**Salon C-2**

### Afternoon Workshops (1:00pm - 4:00pm)

**Making Sense of Visitor Studies Statistics: Part 2 - A "How To" Overview for Conducting Analyses, and Interpreting Results of Simple Inferential Parametric and Nonparametric Analyses**  
*Deborah Wasserman and Mary Ann Wojton*,  
 Lifelong Learning Group at COSI's Center for Research and Evaluation  
 Competency: **C**  
**Salon C-1**

**Digging Deeper: A Brief Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods**  
*Sarah Cohn*, Aurora Consulting  
 Competency: **C**  
**Salon C-3**

**Building Your Data Practices: Part 2 - Tools to Help You Tell a Data-Driven Narrative**  
*Jen Benoit-Bryan and Katherine Gean*,  
 Slover Linett Audience Research  
 Competency: **C**  
**Salon C-2**

### Data Visualization & Reporting FIG Slide Clinic 6:00pm - 8:00pm

#### Salon A-1

Are your slides suffering from too much text? Do you have a slide deck that needs a visual refresh? Get free coaching from Data Visualization and Reporting FIG members at the slide clinic. Bring your laptop and slide deck. It is a drop-in event, so anyone is welcome to come get tips to make their presentation shine!

## SESSION STREAMS

To help attendees choose the sessions that will best meet their needs, we provide a variety of streams of discussion. Session streams are listed below each session in the program.

**Practical Tips:** Information about carrying out visitor studies that is particularly relevant for those new to the field but also useful for veterans.

**Methods and Methodologies:** Strategies and concepts related to data collection, analysis, and reporting.

**Reporting Findings:** Presenting the findings from a discrete research or evaluation project.

**Big Questions and Field-wide Issues:** Wrestles with a big question in the field and/or poses a problem or question for a group to discuss/solve. This could be work continued from a previous convening.

**Diversity, Equity, Inclusion:** Focused on the ways visitor studies help us better understand and implement inclusive practices that can foster diversity and improve accessibility at our institutions and in our field.

**Networks and Partnerships:** Exploring the opportunities and challenges presented by projects that bring together multiple institutions or communities to create informal learning networks; role of partnerships.

## SESSION FORMATS

**Paper Presentation:** Presenters will have approximately 15 minutes to present on a single topic, project, or study. In most paper sessions, multiple presenters will speak on complementary topics or themes.

**Panel Presentation:** Presenters hold a cohesive, but multi-part session on a single theme. These sessions examine an issue, specific problem, topic, or theme from a variety of perspectives. While this may include traditional presentations, we encourage presenters to consider alternative techniques that incorporate greater audience engagement, discussion, and interaction on the topic.

**Roundtable Discussion:** Presenters facilitate an informal group discussion around a key topic or area of interest in the field. In this format, the presenter briefly frames the topic and then devotes most of the time to discussion.

**Working Group:** Presenters facilitate action-focused discussion to generate ideas or plans to move towards white papers, publications, and/or policies. These sessions are highly collaborative and intended to result in new directions or products.

**Fireside Chat:** An invited leader in visitor studies shares thoughts on the state of our field and this year's conference theme, and engages in a moderated Q&A discussion with attendees.

## 2018 CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

### Thursday, July 19, 2018

8:00am - 9:00am Attendee Breakfast - Foyer  
8:00am - 5:00pm VSA Silent Auction  
- Salon C Foyer

9:00am - 10:30am VSA and AMM Opening Plenary  
and Keynote - Ballroom A-B-C



**Dr. Coco Fusco**

#### Keynote Speaker: Dr. Coco Fusco

Dr. Fusco is an interdisciplinary artist and writer, as well as the Andrew Banks Endowed Professor of Art at the University of Florida. Fusco received her M.A. in Modern Thought and Literature from Stanford University, and her Ph.D. in Art and Visual Culture from Middlesex University.

Fusco has also authored several publications, including *English Is Broken Here: Notes on Cultural Fusion in the Americas* (1995) and her latest book, *Dangerous Moves: Performance and Politics in Cuba* (in English by Tate Publications in 2015, and Spanish by Turner Libros in 2017). Fusco's performances and videos have been presented in the 56th Venice Biennale, two Whitney Biennials (2008 and 1993), BAM's Next Wave Festival, Frieze Special Projects, The Liverpool Biennial, the Sydney Biennale, The Johannesburg Biennial, The Kwangju Biennale, The Shanghai Biennale and Mercosul. Her works have also been shown at the Tate Liverpool, The Museum of Modern Art, The Walker Art Center and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Barcelona.

Dr. Fusco is a recipient of a 2016 Greenfield Prize, a 2014 Cintas Fellowship, a 2013 Guggenheim Fellowship, a 2013 Ab-solut Art Writing Award, a 2013 Fulbright Fellowship, a 2012 US Artists Fellowship and a 2003 Herb Alpert Award in the Arts.

10:30am - 10:45am Coffee Break - Salon A & C Foyers

10:45am - 12:00pm Concurrent Sessions

#### Larger Than Life: Evaluating Museum-Wide Initiatives - Salon A-3

*Gretchen Haupt, Science Museum of Minnesota;*  
*Alexander Lussenhop, Museum of Science; Allison Cosby,*  
*Conner Prairie Interactive History Park*

##### ► Panel

*Stream: Big Questions and Field-Wide Issues*

Museums often undertake initiatives extending beyond a single exhibit or program. Do visitors notice? What assumptions get made in crafting and promoting these initiatives? What kinds of issues do visitors expect us to address? Three evaluators grapple with these questions and more at different scales.

#### Recognizing Youth and Educator Identities Around Computational Thinking

- Salon A-4

*Leigh Ann Mesiti and Alana Parkes, Museum of Science;*  
*Aki Shibata-Pliner, Science Museum of Minnesota*

##### ► Panel

*Stream: Reporting Findings*

This interactive session will share stories from two institutions who approached computational thinking research from different vantage points. Hear findings from two museums who engaged

youth and educators in computational thinking practices: one through an exhibition, the other around education programming.

#### Study and Improve Visitor Experience Using Timing and Tracking

- Salon C-2

*Karen Wise, Wise Strategic Advising; Beverly Serrell,*  
*Serrell & Associates*

##### ► Panel

*Stream: Methods and Methodologies; Practical Tips*

Working in small groups, attendees will use Timing and Tracking (T&T) data sets gathered from several different kinds of museum exhibitions and organizations, exploring simple but powerful methods to see patterns that can inform operations, exhibitions planning and management, education, evaluation and organizational prioritization.

#### Evaluation of Design Thinking in Museum Settings

- Salon C-6

*Scott Burg, Rockman et al*

##### ► Paper

*Stream: Reporting Findings; Practical Tips*

Museums are increasingly incorporating design thinking to improve organizational planning and program implementation. This presentation will highlight evaluation of design thinking projects at three museums. These include the design of a new Education Center, a teacher professional development



## 2018 CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

workshop, and development of three core exhibits to enhance school field trips.

### Look Up at the Stars: Integrating a User-Centered Design Process Into a Natural History Museum

- Salon C-6

**Barry Joseph, American Museum of Natural History**

► Paper

*Stream:* Reporting Findings; Practical Tips

How do you take a 19th century institution - like, say, a Natural History Museum - into the 21st century? At the American Museum of Natural History, one approach was to develop an internal skunk works to tackle how to bring the digital specimens produced and studied by Museum scientists to the public through new digital interactives. Using VR, AR and more, we developed prototypes and tested them with over 1,000 visitors to identify challenges and opportunities for the Museum visit of the future. Come learn how we developed the process and what we learned along the way.

### Relevancy, Transparency, Trust: SCIENCES Project for Community Engagement in Chicago

- Salon C-8

**Lisa-Anne Kelly and Shelly Hope, Chicago Zoological Society; Kate Livingston, ExposeYourMuseum LLC**

► Panel

*Stream:* Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

SCIENCES strives to increase community engagement in science and conservation in Chicago's Fuller Park neighborhood. We will discuss lessons learned about the roles of education programs and evaluation in expanding participation in the missions of informal science learning institutions, maintaining relevancy with diverse audiences, and fostering transparency and community trust.

### Becoming Affect Aware: Ethics, Empowerment, and Emotion Detection

- Salon C-4

**Sarah May, Museum of Science, Boston; Gabrielle Schlichtmann, EdTogether, Sunewan Paneto, Museum of Science, Boston; Kim Ducharme, CAST.**

► Panel

*Stream:* Methods and Methodologies

Emotion is a critical mediator of human experience. "Affect aware" technologies can influence experiences automatically. Researchers from the Museum of Science, Boston (MOS), Edtogether, and CAST will discuss our trajectory towards "af-

fect awareness," as issues of trust, transparency, and ethics have percolated throughout three recent emotion engagement studies at MOS.

12:15pm - 1:30pm Lunch on your Own

12:15pm - 1:30pm VSA FIG Lunches

Art Museums FIG: Salon A-1

Bridging Communities FIG: Panera Bread, 501 S. State Street

Data Viz FIG: Yolk South Loop, 1120 South Michigan Ave

Internal Evaluators FIG: Salon A-2

ZAFIG: Salon A-3

1:45pm - 3:00pm Concurrent Sessions

### Fireside Chat

- Salon A-3

**Deborah Perry, Selinda Research Associates, Inc.**

► Fireside Chat

Dr. Perry has conducted research on the role of intrinsic motivation in informal educational settings focusing on the question, "What makes learning fun?" In addition to her accomplishments in museum exhibit and program evaluation, she is the founder and director of Chicago-based Selinda Research Associates, as well as a former VSA President and board member. Attend this session to participate in a discussion about the role of visitor studies in supporting visitor-centered learning and translating research to practice.

### Measuring Visitor Motivation, Expectations, and Satisfaction

- Salon A-4

**Sheri Levinsky-Raskin, Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum; Amanda Thompson Rundahl, Saint Louis Art Museum; Kanani Hoopai, Mission Inn Foundation; Mariruth Leftwich, PhD, Senator John Heinz History**

► Roundtable

*Stream:* Methods and Methodologies; Practical Tips

Why do visitors come to our institutions, what do they want, and do we deliver meaningful and memorable experiences? This session explores approaches for documenting visitor perceptions, motivations, expectations, learning, and satisfaction, and empowers participants to leverage data in ways that inform institution relevance, value, and accountability to our public.

## 2018 CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

### Blending Both Worlds: Walking the Evaluator-Practitioner Path

- Salon C-2

*Elizabeth Bolander, Cleveland Museum of Art; Patience Baach, The Field Museum; Marcus Harshaw, Indiana Historical Society*

► Roundtable

*Stream: Practical Tips*

Join us for a roundtable discussion on blended evaluator-practitioner positions. Discussion leaders will discuss how they are now striving to find balance in evolving evaluator roles, including some of the greatest opportunities and challenges. Let's work together to develop strategies and tactics for managing the divide between these distinct, yet sometimes overlapping, worlds.

### Reconceptualizing Science Literacy: Moving Towards Richer and More Meaningful Measurement of STEM Literacy

- Salon C-4

*Monae Verbeke, Institute for Learning Innovation*

► Roundtable

*Stream: Methods and Methodologies*

STEM literacy often focuses on education for the "good of the person" (a top-down approach), rather than the engagement of individuals as a useful exercise for both the individual as well as for STEM (a community approach). ILLI is attempting to change this paradigm, co-creating an innovative, digital science literacy tool, to explore its potential as a user-led, self-measurement application.

### Ant Adaptation: A Complex Interactive Tabletop Museum Game

- Salon C-6

*Kit Martin, Northwestern University*

► Paper

*Stream: Methods and Methodologies; Reporting Findings*

Informal learning environments can contain powerful tools, such as constructivist learning games, that scaffold learners into solving ecological problems. In this paper we propose a means to analyze these interactions, Constructivist Dialogue Mapping, and the means to design these interventions for accidental learning in informal spaces, Agent Based Modeling Games.

### Doomsday at the Science Museum: Measuring Visitor Understanding in an Exhibit About Nuclear Weapons & Climate Change

Salon C-6

*Jana Greenslit, Museum of Science and Industry*

► Paper

*Stream: Methods and Methodologies; Reporting Findings*

This session presents how to write an interview and ask questions when measuring visitor understanding in a science museum exhibit about nuclear weapons and climate change. It provides a model for how to appropriately probe for understanding when discussing complex, contemporary, and potentially politically charged topics with visitors.

### Formative Evaluation of Facilitated Play Engagement with Early-Childhood Learners

- Salon C-6

*Brian Slattery and Erin Shoffstall, Lincoln Park Zoo*

► Paper

*Stream: Methods and Methodologies; Reporting Findings*

This paper presents an on-going collaborative effort between two evaluation teams at Lincoln Park Zoo, regarding the interaction between interpretive staff and child visitors. This drove the development of a facilitative role to support hands-on, guest-centered play activities, which was evaluated for its impact on guest engagement.

### The F-Word: Failure and Failing Towards Success

- Salon C-8

*Mary Jackson, Woodland Park Zoo; Taline Kuyumjian, Kuyumjian Consulting LLC; Jennifer Rigney, Monterey Bay Aquarium; Kathryn Owen, Kathryn Owen Consulting LLC*

► Panel

*Stream: Big Questions; Field-Wide Issues*

Few of us like to admit when we fail, and yet we all do. How can we reframe failure as a valuable learning experience, encouraging transparency and reflection in our own practice? Panelists will share their own experiences with professional failure, including their lessons learned and strategies to make failure an acceptable discussion in our field.

3:00pm - 5:00pm

Exhibit Hall Cocktail Reception and Poster Sessions - Salon A & C Foyers

See page 20 for poster descriptions

5:30pm - 7:30pm

Get to Know VSA Happy Hour - Bar Louie River North

Bar Louie River North

333-335 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, IL 60654

Transportation on your own.

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VSA invites you to a Happy Hour, where you can get to know fellow attendees and the organization better. Arrive before 6:00pm for your chance to win a special gift from our own Beverly Serrell!

## 2018 CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

7:00pm - 9:00pm Dining Discussions

Join these participant-led conversations over dinner, each focusing on a specific topic. Reserve your spot at check-in, and take part in informal networking and socializing.

### Friday, July 20, 2018

7:30am - 8:30am Coffee Service - Ballroom A-B-C

8:00am - 3:45pm VSA Silent Auction - Salon C Foyer

8:00am - 8:45am VSA Membership Meeting - Ballroom A

Join your colleagues in learning more about what VSA has been up to this past year. Representatives from various committees will share about VSA's recent activities, provide a financial update, and preview some exciting upcoming initiatives. We welcome your feedback, as we discuss our plans for the future.

9:00am - 10:00am VSA Plenary Session - Ballroom A

#### Panel: Chicago Cultural Organizations Research Network (CCORN)

- Ballroom A

The Chicago Cultural Organizations Research Network (CCORN) was established in 2012 by Dr. Suzanne Gaskins, now professor emeritus at Northeastern Illinois University, in an effort to build a community of researchers and evaluators working in or with Chicago area cultural institutions. The network includes a diverse group of members from museums, colleges and universities, and external research and evaluation firms. CCORN brings together seasoned and novice professionals to discuss a variety of topics related to understanding visitor behavior and learning.

We have identified four members of CCORN who represent the diversity of professionals that make up this local research and evaluation network: Cecilia Garibay, Jerry Luebke, Therese Quinn, and Beverly Serrell. Each of these members offers a unique perspective on our field, representing both different approaches to and contexts for evaluation.

VSA aims to highlight exciting initiatives happening in its conference city, and we are inspired by CCORN's collective efforts to build a community of researchers and evaluators working in or with Chicago area cultural institutions.

10:00am - 10:15am Coffee Break - Ballroom Foyer

10:15am - 11:30am Concurrent Sessions

#### What's Next?

#### Visitor Journeys at the Clyfford Still Museum

- Salon A-3

*Tanya Treptow and Katherine Gean, Slover Linett Audience Research; Sonia Rae, Clyfford Still Museum*

#### ► Panel

#### Stream: Networks and Partnerships; Reporting Findings

This panel presentation provides an in-depth overview case study of a research partnership between the Clyfford Still Museum and Slover Linett Audience Research, using innovative qualitative research to understand visitor journeys and help the museum grow their local audiences.

#### What Research Tells Us About Supporting Engagement in Science

- Salon A-4

*Marta Beyer, Museum of Science, Boston; Rachel Bonnette, University of Pittsburgh; Emily Howell, University of Wisconsin-Madison*

#### ► Panel

#### Stream: Reporting Findings

Fostering interest in and engagement with science is critical, but how can we support this work in museums, schools, and at large? Come hear perspectives from three different research studies and learn ways to measure and encourage engagement with science.

#### Reconciling Public Trust with Museums, Non-Profits, and Evaluation

- Salon C-2

*Renae Youngs, Minnesota State Arts Board; Sarah Cohn, Aurora Consulting; Vidhya Shanker, University of Minnesota*

#### ► Panel

#### Stream: Big Questions and Field-Wide Issues

The trust of visitors, clients, and communities is important to both evaluators and museums. It lends our work credibility, but we rarely question why, or even whether, we deserve it. This session will present challenges our fields face regarding trustworthiness before initiating a lively discussion about how to build trust.

#### Walking the Talk: Visitors' Understanding of Zoos/Aquariums' Conservation Efforts

- Salon C-4

*Jennifer Rigney, Monterey Bay Aquarium; Amy Niedbalski, Saint Louis Zoo; Manda Smith, Lincoln Park Zoo*

#### ► Panel

Stream: Reporting Findings; Big Questions & Field-Wide Issues  
Zoos and aquariums use education, research and advocacy



## 2018 CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

to advance wildlife conservation goals. How effectively have these organizations been communicating this work to visitors? Panelists will discuss evaluating efforts to improve this communication and whether understanding of zoos/aquariums as conservation organizations is crucial for inspiring conservation action in visitors.

### The Evolution of Evaluation to Support Community Engagement

- Salon C-6

*Sarah Lee, Slover Linett Audience Research; Elizabeth Bolander, Cleveland Museum of Art; Ken Morris, Detroit Institute of Arts*

► Working Group

*Stream: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Practical Tips*  
Informal learning organizations have been focusing more and more attention on reaching and engaging communities that have typically been underrepresented. We'll facilitate a candid conversation about the implications of this shift on the evaluation field, identifying new or existing resources to support evaluators who are involved in community engagement work.

### Program Evaluation Practice and Capacity in the Canadian Art Museum Sector: Findings from a National Study of Museum Practitioners

- Salon C-8

*Agnieszka Chalas, Queen's University*

► Paper

*Stream: Methods and Methodologies; Reporting Findings*  
In this paper presentation, you'll hear a report on the findings of a national study of evaluation practice and capacity in Canada's largest publicly owned art museums and examine their implications for both pre-service preparation and in-service professional development of museum professionals.

### Eliciting Teen Voices and Stakeholder Values Using Most Significant Change

- Salon C-8

*Cassandra Solomon-Filer, Shedd Aquarium*

► Paper

*Stream: Methods and Methodologies; Reporting Findings*  
This paper presentation addresses techniques to engage teens and other stakeholders for youth informal education programing focusing on STEM/STEAM and career exploration.

11:30am - 1:30pm

Lunch on Your Own

11:30am - 1:15pm

VSA Editorial Board Lunch - Pullman Boardroom

12:00pm - 1:15pm

VSA Committee Meetings

Conference Planning Committee: Salon C-2

Development Committee: Salon C-4

Professional Development Work Group: Salon C-6

Membership Communications Work Group: Salon C-8

1:45pm - 3:00pm

Concurrent Sessions

### Fireside Chat

- Salon A-3

*Judy Koke, Institute for Learning Innovation*

► Fireside Chat

Throughout her career as a researcher and museum professional, Dr. Koke has challenged museums to broaden and deepen their meaningful relationships with audiences. She has acted as a VSA board member and held leadership roles at the Art Gallery of Ontario and The Nelson-Atkins Art Museum, and she currently serves as Director of Professional Development at the Institute for Learning Innovation. Attend this session to participate in a discussion about true collaboration between organizations and their communities and the changing role of museums today.

### Say the Unspoken: Fostering Dialogue for Emerging Professionals

- Salon A-4

*Jason Allen, Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art; Lauren Wilson, Illuminated Ideas; Taline Kuyumjian, Kuyumjian Consulting LLC*

► Roundtable

*Stream: Big Questions and Field-Wide Issues; Practical Tips*  
Transparency with our communities must start by critically examining our own industry. This roundtable discusses the important role emerging professionals play in shaping the field of visitors studies. Join your peers in an open, frank conversation about growing in and influencing our field.

### Collective Insight: Strategies for Culturally Responsive Evaluation Capacity Building

- Salon C-2

*Lisa Trahan and Patricia Montano, Bridging Communities FIG; Kate Westaby, Milwaukee Evaluation & University of Wisconsin-Madison; Angie Ong, University of Washington; Jill Stein, Independent Consultant*

► Working Group

*Stream: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Practical Tips*  
Join the Bridging Communities FIG to learn about case studies in building capacity for culturally responsive evaluation among emerging and established evaluation professionals. Together,

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brainstorm strategies for VSA professional development and capacity building in culturally responsive evaluation that will be shared with VSA's Professional Development Work Group.

### Talking About Teens: Evaluating Museum Programs that Target Teens

- Salon C-4

*Jennifer Borland, Rockman et al; Alison Mroczkowski, Museum of Science and Industry; Preeti Gupta, American Museum of Natural History*

#### ► Roundtable

*Stream:* Practical Tips

The vast majority of out-of-school time programs target youth ages twelve and younger. Similarly, museum programming tends to focus on young children and adults, and has sometimes struggled to attract and engage teen audiences. In this Roundtable discussion, we will talk about the challenges and benefits of programs designed for teens and the unique issues and opportunities that go along with evaluating these programs.

### Big Questions About Food Security - The BigPicnic Project

- Salon C-6

*Theano Moussouri, UCL*

#### ► Panel

*Stream:* Networks and Partnerships; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

As social and scientific institutions, botanic gardens hold the expertise to inform, raise awareness of and engage the public with global environmental matters. This presentation discusses how BigPicnic, a multi-actor collaboration and engagement EC-funded project, provided a platform for dialogue about responsible research and innovation on food security.

### Exploring Empathy: Lessons from Challenging Exhibitions

- Salon C-8

*Kirsten Madsen, National September 11 Memorial & Museum; Silvina Fernandez-Duque, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum; Juli Goss, Crystal Bridges Museum of Art; Rebekah Sobel, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*

#### ► Panel

*Stream:* Reporting Findings

In this session, panelists will share their experiences with conducting evaluations that center on visitor empathy and discuss the challenges of capturing empathy in museum settings. How

do we transform empathy from a vague concept into a useful framework? How can we ensure that experiences are not only emotional, but transformative?

3:00pm - 4:00pm

Exhibit Hall Coffee Break - Salon A & C Foyers

4:00pm - 5:15pm

Concurrent Sessions

### Engaging Undergraduate Students in Audience Research

- Salon A-3

*Nicole R. Rivera, North Central College; Fran Mast, John G. Shedd Aquarium; Jennifer Matiasek, Chicago Zoological Society/Brookfield Zoo*

#### ► Panel

*Stream:* Practical Tips; Networks and Partnerships

Presenters will introduce a variety of approaches for engaging undergraduate students in audience research including volunteering, internships, part-time employment, classes, and community-engaged learning. Attendees will be invited to share strategies and structures that they employ and brainstorm new approaches for engaging students in audience research.

### Digital Experiences in Art Museums: Visitor Preferences, Participation, and Impacts

- Salon A-4

*Maia Werner-Avidon, MWA Insights; Laura Brown, The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art; Hannah Ridenour, Cleveland Museum of Art; Shiralee Hudson Hill, Art Gallery of Ontario*

#### ► Panel

*Stream:* Reporting Findings

Using case studies from three art museums, this session will explore what recent research has revealed about the incorporation of digital experiences in art museums. Presentations will focus on visitors' preferences for analog versus digital experiences, digital engagement, and impacts of digital experiences ranging from apps to augmented reality.

### Bringing Our Values to Work

- Salon C-2

*Kate Livingston, ExposeYourMuseum LLC; Cecilia Garibay, Garibay Group; Jeanine Pollard, University of Illinois at Chicago*

#### ► Panel

*Stream:* Big Questions and Field-Wide Issues

How do our values compel us? What are the risks and rewards of "living your values?" What happens when personal values and museum values don't align? In this session, attendees as-

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sess their core values and explore ways to infuse them deeply and meaningfully into their museum and visitor studies work.

### Who’s Not Here? Defining Audiences, Broadening Methods, Changing Relationships

- Salon C-4

*Leigh Ann Mesiti and Sarah May, Museum of Science; Juli Goss, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art; Maddie Smith, Slover Linett Audience Research*

► Panel

*Stream:* Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Practical Tips  
Museums and cultural institutions grapple with issues related to “who’s not here?” and research and evaluation professionals are increasingly addressing this question. Evaluation professionals from institutions at different points in this work will discuss strategies for defining potential audiences, conducting evaluation, and shaping organizational practices and relationships.

### Parents as Partners in Supporting Early Childhood STEM Learning

- Salon C-6

*Scott Pattison and Sasha Palmquist, Institute for Learning Innovation; Maureen Callanan, University of California Santa Cruz; Graciela Solis, Loyola University Chicago*

► Panel

*Stream:* Reporting Findings

Although museums and other informal learning contexts are critical for supporting early childhood STEM learning, programs often undervalue the important role of parents and

caregivers. Presenters will share findings and lessons learned from three recent research-practice partnership projects that attempted to authentically engage parents as collaborators in supporting children’s learning.

### Understanding and Assessing Visitor Attention

- Salon C-8

*Ross Loomis, Department of Psychology at Colorado State University; Stephen Bitgood, Jacksonville State University*

► Panel

*Stream:* Methods and Methodologies; Reporting Findings  
How do visitors attend to exhibits? What is the best way to evaluate attention to promote effective interpretation? Stephen Bitgood will highlight his research on visitor attention. Ross Loomis will follow up with an evaluation model for understanding visitor attention. Both presenters will provide time for questions and discussion.

6:00pm - 9:00pm VSA & AMM Evening Event:

Field Museum of Natural History

1400 South Lake Shore Drive Chicago, IL 60605

*Transportation provided; buses on a rotating loop beginning at 5:30pm at 8th Street, Lobby Level*



### Saturday, July 21, 2018

8:00am - 9:30am

VSA Closing Plenary and Breakfast  
- Ballroom A-B-C

#### Speaker: Nicole R. Bowman-Farrell, Ph.D.



Dr. Nicole R. Bowman

Dr. Nicole Bowman is the president and founder of the nationally award-winning Bowman Performance Consulting (BPC) in Shawano, Wisconsin. Dr. Bowman earned her PhD in Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW-Madison). As BPC’s president, Dr. Bowman has contributed over two decades of culturally

responsive and multi-jurisdictional evaluation, research, training and technical assistance.

VSA believes Dr. Bowman’s work on the application of evaluation findings, particularly in terms of possibilities for positively shaping public policy, aligns strongly with our conference attendees’ interests. BPC’s living mission and motto is “working WITH people and not ON them”. This ethos has contributed to Dr. Bowman’s reputation as a responsive and respected subject matter expert on multi-jurisdictional, education policy, and Indigenous evaluation.



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9:45am - 11:00am

Concurrent Sessions

### Gathering Data to Inform Equity-Focused Organizational Change: Methodological Implications

- Salon A-3

*Evelyn Ronning and Gretchen Haupt, Science Museum of Minnesota*

► Panel

*Stream:* Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Big Questions and Field-Wide Issues

Examples of evaluation and research projects focused on organizational work around equity and inclusion will be explored and shared. Panelists and participants will discuss the ethical implications of working with practitioners to use organizational data to transform their institutional structures, program models, and cross-departmental relationships in support of equity initiatives.

### Researching with a Field-Wide Perspective

- Salon A-4

*Kari Nelson, Thanksgiving Point Institute; Nicole Rivera, North Central College; Michelle L. Nguyen, Boston Children's Museum; Sarah Brenkert, The Children's Museum of Denver at Marsico Campus*

► Panel

*Stream:* Networks and Partnerships; Reporting Findings

To better position Children's Museums as visible, trusted resources for learning in their communities, the Children's Museum Research Network has conducted a series of studies on this sector of informal learning. This session will share the process and results of the studies as well as implications for the wider field.

### What's the Benefit of Single-Visit Art Museum Programs to Students?

- Salon C-2

*Amanda Krantz, Randi Korn & Associates, Inc.; Missy Higgins-Linder, Cleveland Museum of Art; Stephanie Downey, Randi Korn & Associates, Inc.*

► Panel

*Stream:* Reporting Findings

Single-visit fieldtrip programs are the primary ways museums serve students (and in great numbers), but what is their value to students? In this session, we will share the research design and results of a national, multi-site study investigating the

impact of single-visit art museum programs on students grades 4-6.

### Outside In: Learning from Community Voices in Visitor Studies

- Salon C-4

*Cecilia Garibay, Garibay Group; Leticia Perez Castellanos, Escuela Nacional de Conservación; Verónica Garcia Luis, Exploratorium; Rebecca Teasdale, Garibay Group*

► Panel

*Stream:* Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

This panel discusses approaches to honoring and incorporating community voice in planning, implementation, and evaluation of informal learning projects. Issues explored include ways we might define "success" in ways that consider community perspectives; approaches that helps us learn about the community's impact; and possibilities for tracing long-term community impact.

### Timing and Tracking Revisited

- Salon C-6

*Mary Ann Wojton and Joe Heimlich, COSI/Lifelong Learning Group*

► Paper

*Stream:* Methods and Methodologies

Visitor movement through one exhibit hall was studied using four different timing and tracking methods; including High Speed Video Analysis (HSVA), fluorescent powder and black light, questionnaire, and observation. Advantages and disadvantages of each method will be discussed in relation to the evaluation questions, logistics, and available resources.

### Critical Appraisal: What's the Value?

- Salon C-6

*Cathy Sigmond, Randi Korn & Associates, Inc.*

► Paper

*Stream:* Methods and Methodologies

What is critical appraisal and what is its methodological value? Hear how RK&A used critical appraisal to assess programs at the National Building Museum, learn the benefits and limitations of using this economic and flexible strategy, and debate its value as part of the evaluator's toolbox.

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### The “Unsafe” Museum: Negotiating Difficult Heritage

- Salon C-8

*Theopisti Stylianou-Lambert, Cyprus University of Technology, Cyprus; Alexandra Bounia, University of the Aegean, UCL Qatar; Jennifer Carter, Université du Québec à Montréal, Canada; Kate Flinner, New Knowledge Organization Ltd, New York*

► Paper

*Stream:* Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The central question that runs through this session is: how can a museum or a cultural heritage site that deals with difficult heritage become an “unsafe”, unsettling place and provide transformative experiences? What is the responsibility of these institutions and to whom are they accountable to?

11:15am - 12:30pm

Concurrent Sessions

### How Informal Learning and Science Communication Define and Assess Identity

- Salon A-3

*Kevin Crowley, University of Pittsburgh; James Bell, Center for the Advancement of Informal STEM Education; Kelly Riedinger, Senior Researcher, Center for Research on Lifelong STEM Learning; John Besley, Michigan State University*

► Panel

*Stream:* Reporting Findings

This session explores how identity is conceptualized and assessed in informal science learning and science communication. We present findings from interviews with leading identity researchers, and a suite of tools for evaluators and practitioners that are based on these findings. We discuss how evaluation can advance practice in both fields.

### Design-Based Research in Informal Education: Examples, Promise, and Pitfalls

- Salon A-4

*Elizabeth Kollman, Museum of Science; Marcie Benne, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry; Marjorie Bequette, Science Museum of Minnesota; Joyce Ma, Exploratorium*

► Panel

*Stream:* Methods and Methodologies; Practical Tips

Recently, museums have been encouraged to use design-based research, a formal education research methodology, to bridge research and practice in informal education. Come hear from four museum researchers about how they have translated this

methodology, including the benefits as well as the difficulties they experienced in using design-based research.

### Visitor Perceptions on the Well-Being of Animals in Captivity

- Salon C-2

*Manda Smith, Lincoln Park Zoo; Jerry Luebke, Chicago Zoological Society-Brookfield Zoo; Mary Jackson, Woodland Park Zoo; Nick Visscher, Denver Zoo.*

► Panel

*Stream:* Reporting Findings; Practical Tips

Speakers will share how perceptions of animal welfare studies from different zoos have informed improvements in visitor engagement through the practical application of findings to the design of content and general visitor experience. Large group discussion on how the audience might conduct similar studies at their own institutions will follow.

### Visitor Insights Driving Change and Practice

- Salon C-4

*Caitlin Ballingall, Marina Guimar, Erica Maganti, and Keith Snode, Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum*

► Panel

*Stream:* Methods and Methodologies; Reporting Findings

Examine cross-departmental studies that led to new wayfinding methods and program development practices. Exploring examples of front-end assessments, meaning mapping, promoter scales, user-testing, and prototyping, attendees will generate ideas for steps cultural institutions can take to incorporate visitor insights to address institutional relevancy, transparency, value, and accountability.

### Data Neutrality: The Role of Evaluation in the #MuseumsAreNotNeutral Movement

- Salon C-6

*Catherine Wood, University of Washington; Kathryn Owen, Kathryn Owen Consulting; Sena Dawes, Missouri Historical Society*

► Roundtable

*Stream:* Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Big Questions and Field-Wide Issues

As evaluators and researchers, we make the claim that data is neutral. On the other hand, we also tell stories with data. Inspired by the conversations around the #MuseumsAreNotNeutral movement, this session will delve into dialogue around the role evaluators play in perpetuating (or not) neutrality at our institutions.

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 John Hopkins University  
 The Adept Group, LLC

## THE VSA POSTER SESSION

Thursday, July 19, 2018 | 3:00pm - 5:00pm | Salon A-3

### ▶ Poster 1

**Visitor Navigation: Definition, Importance, and Design Guidelines**

**Stephen Bitgood, Jacksonville State University**

A model of navigation, based on 35 years of research, will be presented along with handouts, guidelines and bibliography. An effective navigation system requires knowledge of conceptual orientation, wayfinding, and circulation patterns. Each of these elements will be examined and a checklist and guidelines for effective use will be provided to the audience.

### ▶ Poster 2

**The Role of Evaluation in Connecting Families to Birds**

**Shasta Bray, Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden; Elaine Horr, COSI/Lifelong Learning Group**

A primary goal of the Cincinnati Zoo's reinterpreted Wings of the World exhibit is to connect visitors to birds through family engagement. We present how evaluation (focus groups, prototyping, and formative assessment) shaped the final interpretive design and discuss the ways and extent to which the exhibit successfully engages families.

### ▶ Poster 3

**Interpretation, Zero: Place, For the Win!**

**Brian Forist, Indiana University**

Presented will be findings from a study of two-way, dialogic interpretation in informal settings in national parks. The study's results indicate that what an interpreter says or how they say it is far less important than the actual park experience the visitor has.

### ▶ Poster 4

**Native Art Now! Assessing Visitor Perspectives of Contemporary Native Art**

**Jacqueline Rooksberry, Eiteljorg Museum of Native Americans and Western Art**

The poster presentation will detail results and challenges in assessing visitor perceptions of Contemporary Native Art at the Eiteljorg Museum in Indianapolis. We wanted to gain an understanding of visitor perceptions of Contemporary Native Art regarding complex topics that were concerns for Native American artists, museum professionals, and the general public.



## ▶ Poster 5

**Understanding Public, Visitors, and Participants in Science Events**

**Naoko Kato-Nitta**, The Institute of Statistical Mathematics, Japan

Better understanding their visitors is one of the great interests for science communicators. Generally, science communicators or scientific experts assume that the people with whom they engage in dialogue during scientific outreach activities are the ‘general public’. However, our findings suggest that there are socio-cultural and attitudinal differences between visitors to the exhibits and the general public.

## ▶ Poster 6

**Museums are like Onions: Mapping Layered Perspectives of Visitor Experience**

**Megan Goeke**, Science Museum of Minnesota

A holistic perspective on museum experience requires multi-faceted investigative approaches. Initial findings and emerging conversations from a museum observation study looking at visitor patterns of use across museum spaces suggest that this large, growing data set holds potential for innovative analysis and layered interpretation across the multiple visitor experience studies.

## ▶ Poster 7

**Stop Surveying Me!**

**Sara Davis**, Saint Louis Science Center

How much are you surveying or interviewing your visitors? At the Saint Louis Science Center, we have studies going on every day. How does this affect the visitor experience? Help us explore this topic at the “un-poster”: an interactive poster that is more about discussion than reporting out.

## ▶ Poster 8

**An Evidence-based Informal STEM Learning (ISL) Professional Framework**

**Margaret Glass**, Association of Science-Technology Center

The ISL Professional Framework ([islframework.org](http://islframework.org)) is a tool for science museum professionals to understand and advance their professional capacity by assessing their professional competencies. ISL institutions can identify competencies, plan, provide, and assess staff development. Professional organizations and academic programs can plan learning opportunities using the Framework.

## ▶ Poster 9

**Experience Sampling for Museums and Cultural Organizations**

**Aaron Price** and **A. Mroczkowski**, Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago

We present on three projects that use cell phones to collect data from guests of a cultural institution. We will describe: 1) The the-

oretical background and history of experience sampling in cultural settings, 2) Instrument development, 3) Attrition and selection bias, 4) Analysis and interpretation of results.

## ▶ Poster 10

**Summative Evaluation of Art Spots: Experiential Art Installations for Children**

**Michelle Maghari**, Crocker Art Museum;  
**Taline Kuyumjian**, Kuyumjian Consulting

Learn about Art Spots, art installations created by artists working in collaboration with art museum educators and early childhood education professionals, through the project’s evaluation. Insights on successful strategies for broadening, diversifying, and deepening audiences, and enhancing ways art museums can support early child development and school readiness will be shared.

## ▶ Poster 11

**Evaluation of Readability Measures with Exhibit Panels**

**Natalie C. Harris** and **Kara Greven**, Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago

We present on how four readability measures relate to content comprehension among middle school aged museum guests visiting an exhibition about mathematics and patterns. We will describe: 1) summary of the readability measures, 2) contrast these 4 measures, 3) selection bias, 4) analysis and interpretation of results.

## ▶ Poster 12

**Should an Aquarium Interpret Cultural Heritage Stories? The Visitor Perspective**

**Cindy Serrano**, **Elise Walmsley** and **Jennifer Rigney**, Monterey Bay Aquarium

What meaning do visitors make from an aquarium’s theatrical program that interprets stories of culture and history? Discover key findings about how visitors made sense of the unexpected and how the Monterey Bay Aquarium gained valuable insights about inspiring conservation and building affinity for the institution as more than a tourist destination.

## ▶ Poster 13

**Head Start on Engineering: Supporting Engineering Interest Development in Early Childhood**

**Scott Pattison**, Institute for Learning Innovation;  
**Marcie Benne**, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry

Head Start on Engineering is a research-practice project designed to study and support engineering-related interest development for preschool children and their families from low-income backgrounds. This poster presentation will share research findings from the project and explore the utility of studying early childhood interest development as a family-level systems phenomenon.

▶ **Poster 14****Turtle Power: Conservation Through Collaboration***Erin Tate, Saint Louis Zoo*

Through partner collaboration, the Institute for Conservation Medicine and the Saint Louis Zoo has provided over 1,000 area students with field experience and hands-on conservation knowledge, helping to foster affinity for wild spaces that are local to urban schools. Knowledge-based, attitudinal, and observational evaluation reveal that institution outreach benefits not only students but conservation initiatives as well.

▶ **Poster 15****Exploring Exhibit Visitation Patterns***Aubrey Henriksen, Creative Discovery Museum*

This poster demonstrates a token and bucket method for gathering information about exhibit visitation patterns that is attractive, convenient, and simple. Creative Discovery Museum used this method to explore exhibit visitation patterns ahead of exhibit renovations. Conference attendees will leave the conversation with the tools to conduct their own study.

▶ **Poster 16****Using Interpretive Graphics as a Method of Relaying Conservation Messages***Abigail Pope and Nadya Bennett, Columbus Zoo and Aquarium*

Zoos and aquariums often wonder if their graphics are not only read, but if their intended message is understood. We are no exception at the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium, so we had guests look at three graphics that contained similar conservation content and give us their thoughts.

▶ **Poster 17****Engaging with Values and Beliefs: Programs Exploring Science and Religion***Rae Ostman, Jenny McCullough Cosgrove, and Michael Zirulnik, Arizona State University*

Evaluation findings from a national project shed light on successful approaches to engaging museum audiences in potentially polarizing topics. The project created public programs that promote reflection and conversation about the relationship of science and religion. Programs include museum theatre, live storytelling, video reflections, family activities, and teacher professional development.

▶ **Poster 18****Perceptions of STEM in Everyday Life: A Coding Framework***Dolly Hayde, COSI/Lifelong Learning Group and Jill Stein, JKS Consulting*

Although personal connections to STEM is a focus of much re-

search, describing it authentically in terms that resonate with learners themselves remains difficult in large-scale studies. To help address this challenge, we present a coding rubric that captures how learners frame science, technology, engineering, and math within their everyday lives.

▶ **Poster 19****Setting Visitors Up for Success: Observing Reading Behaviors in a Contemporary Art Museum***Jeanine Pollard and Signe Jacobsen, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago*

Introductory texts offer visitors context for the exhibition they are about to experience. This orienting information is especially important for the vast majority of our visitors who are unfamiliar with the contemporary artists whose works are on display. Here we unpack the ways that visitors to the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago engage with introductory texts.

▶ **Poster 20****Revealing Organizational Culture: Implications for Equity and Access in Museums***Choua Her, Gretchen Haupt, and Michelle Manno, Science Museum of Minnesota*

This poster will present iPAGE research findings about aspects of institutional culture that may support or interfere with inclusive environments in which to learn, engage, and identify with STEM and invite VSA participants to contribute their perspectives and experiences with informal learning culture related to inclusion, equity, and access.

▶ **Poster 21****Using Narrative to Engage Girls in Museum Engineering Design Tasks***Dorothy Bennett, Susan Letourneau, and ChangChia James Liu, New York Hall of Science*

The New York Hall of Science, in collaboration with the Amazeum in Arkansas, the Tech Museum in California, and the Creativity Labs at Indiana University, will share findings from their design-based research study investigating whether and how narrative elements in engineering activities can influence girls' engagement in the design process.

▶ **Poster 22****Engaging Parents in Maker Activities at Museums***Susan M. Letourneau, New York Hall of Science*

What qualities of maker experiences support parent engagement? Through observations and interviews with caregivers, this study provides information about parents' involvement in different types of maker activities, as well as their perceptions of the benefits of making for their children and themselves.

## ▶ Poster 23

**@CandidCroc @Brookfield\_Zoo: Visitor Engagement in Conservation through Social Media**

*Lisa-Anne DeGregoria Kelly, Yvette Mendez, and Jerry F. Luebke, Chicago Zoological Society - Brookfield Zoo*

With the goal of “crowdsharing” environmental action, the Chicago Zoological Society, which operates Brookfield Zoo, developed “Carlita the Candid Crocodile,” a social media personality, to involve virtual audiences in conservation conversations and measure their participation. Evaluation captured indicators from blog traffic ([www.czs.org/CandidCroc](http://www.czs.org/CandidCroc)), Twitter, and Instagram (@CandidCroc).

## ▶ Poster 24

**Virtual Reality at the Zoo: Effects of Empathy and Behavior**

*Kirinne Slaughter, Amy Niedbalski, Saint Louis Zoo*

In an effort to understand how to best encourage empathy and pro-environmental behavior in visitors, a virtual reality (VR) experience was contrasted to a more traditional educational experience using immediate and delayed post surveys. Results suggest potential success of VR and point to future research needed.

## ▶ Poster 25

**Visitor Trust When Museums are Not Neutral**

*Catherine Wood, University of Washington*

This descriptive survey study explores visitor trust in museums that address social issues in their exhibits. It examines the degree to which visitors trust both the information within those museums and the museums themselves, as well as the factors they consider when determining trustworthiness.

## ▶ Poster 26

**Warming Up to the Cold War: A Collaborative Evaluation Process**

*Sean Blinn, Heritage Trail Association; Madeleine Pope and Karen Wizevich, Johns Hopkins University*

A Johns Hopkins University professor, alumnus, and current student virtually collaborated with an external partner on a front-end evaluation of *A Designed Life: Contemporary American Textile, Wallpapers, Containers and Packaging*. This innovative evaluation process answered questions about visitor relationships to American design and history during the Cold War.

## ▶ Poster 27

**Reframing Museum Admission Fees as Suggested Donations**

*Jessica Weller, University of Illinois at Chicago*

The debate over museum admission tends to focus on whether entrance fees should be eliminated. However, by reframing admission prices as suggested donations and clearly communicating the purpose of the funds, museums can be more transparent, focus on other barriers to access, and gain respect from the communities they serve.

## ▶ Poster 28

**Effects of Facilitation Context on Conservation Attitudes and Actions**

*Kristen Denton, California Science Center*

This study examines the impacts of conservation-based hands-on activity as well as the impact that the physical setting of this activity may have on desired outcomes. Using multiple points of contact, knowledge gains, attitudes towards sustainable seafood, and pro-conservation behavior were measured.

## ▶ Poster 29

**Visitor Perceptions of the Roles of Zoos in Wildlife Conservation**

*Andrew Glass, Lincoln Park Zoo*

This project examines the current attitudes towards wildlife conservation and the role of zoos among visitors to Lincoln Park Zoo in Chicago. Guests were asked what they saw as the mission of Lincoln Park Zoo and what they saw as the current and ideal roles of zoos in wildlife conservation.

## ▶ Poster 30

**Entry Characteristics and Decision-Making Behaviors of Zoo and Aquarium Visitors**

*Kelly Riedinger and Martin Storksdieck, Oregon State University*

The Center for Research on Lifelong STEM Learning will share lessons and preliminary findings from a study that uses a visitor description research approach to investigate the entry characteristics of zoo and aquarium visitors and how these characteristics play out in terms of decision-making behaviors during a visit.

## ▶ Poster 31

**Examining the Impacts of Museum Educators' Enthusiasm on Visitor's Interest**

*ChangChia James Liu, Purdue University*

The study investigated how museum educators' teaching enthusiasm is perceived by visitors and influences visitors' situational interest during a guided tour. The results indicated that perceived enthusiasm was positively related to visitors' situational interest, and mediated the relationship between visitors' individual and situational interest.

## ▶ Poster 32

**Visitor Evaluation Study at the Spurlock Museum**

*Madeline Artibee, Jillian Davis, and Elisabeth A. Stone, Spurlock Museum @ University of Illinois*

This project tracks a semester-long evaluation of the Spurlock Museum's audiences and relationships to its visitors. The project's focus is to understand who visits the Spurlock Museum at the University of Illinois and how the museum can best serve the needs of current visitors while forging new relationships with potential visitors.



▶ **Poster 33****Trust Starts Within: Using Cross-Departmental Collaboration to Achieve Impact****Wendy Lovelady, NC Museum of Natural Sciences**

Achieving impact requires effort from the entire museum working together towards an agreed-upon end. It's easier said than done as museum departments often function as silos with little collaboration. Staff at the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences describe the process of working across departments to clarify the museum's intended impact.

▶ **Poster 34****Methods for Understanding Facilitation through the ChemAttitudes Project****Hever Velazquez, Science Museum of Minnesota; Allison Anderson, Museum of Science, Boston**

This research investigates facilitation techniques that positively affect visitor' feelings of interest, relevance, and self-efficacy around chemistry. Included are the processes used to recognize, define, and analyze facilitation techniques for hands-on activities, which can be used across informal and formal learning environments for a variety of STEM topics.

▶ **Poster 35****Reaching Out to Teachers: Evaluating Outreach Programs as a Resource****Madison Venables, COSI**

This research project began as an evaluation of COSI's outreach program but ended as a much larger discussion on communication between informal and formal educators. Evaluation methods, findings, and lessons learned will be explored, as well as examples of schools connecting COSI's outreach programs to their classroom curriculum.

▶ **Poster 36****Identifying a Need...Creating a Solution****Nadya J. Bennett, The Columbus Zoo and Aquarium**

As the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium is a vital part of the Central Ohio community, internships are a way to give back. The Audience Research Team recognizes how valuable these collaborations are for the students, and the zoo and has developed a focused internship program for undergraduate and graduate students.

▶ **Poster 37****Guest Journeys: Visitor Behavior at Lincoln Park Zoo****Julia Whyte, Michigan State University; Manda Smith and Brian Slattery, Lincoln Park Zoo**

Visitor studies provide institutions with beneficial information about visitor needs and how visitors interact and engage with

the space, all of which allow for better building and planning of future exhibits. To get a more comprehensive understanding of visitor behavior at the Lincoln Park Zoo, we interviewed guests and recorded their behaviors during their entire visit.

▶ **Poster 38****Exploring Visitor Perceptions: Examining What Visitors Think About Pop Culture****Ben Dudzik and Nicole Reed, University of Washington**

An evaluation was conducted at the Museum of Pop Culture in Seattle, WA to understand what visitors know about pop culture and whether their visit changed their perceptions of pop culture. The museum will use these findings to better understand visitor needs and incorporate these perspectives into future design choices.

▶ **Poster 39****Asking the Experts: Young Adults' Technology Recommendations for Outdoor Spaces****Monae Verbeke and Elysa Corin, Institute for Learning Innovation**

The National Parks Science Challenge is an effort to facilitate young adults' engagement in urban national parks through mobile technologies. Youth advisory groups from two parks were gathered over several months to provide input, share experiences, and direct the development of this mobile technology. Analysis of preliminary findings will be shared.

▶ **Poster 40****Constructing Persistence: Influences on Youths' Views of Failure in Making****Megan Goeke, Science Museum of Minnesota and Alice Anderson, Minneapolis Institute of Art**

We investigated two maker programs at the Science Museum of Minnesota to identify aspects of activity design that create productive or "safe" failure experiences. Starting from youths' viewpoints through video, observation, and interviews, we analyzed examples across the three activity types common in making: assembly, creative construction, and tinkering.

▶ **Poster 41****COVES: Findings from the First Year+ of Data****Ryan Auster and Alexander Lussenhop, Museum of Science, Boston**

The Collaboration for Ongoing Visitor Experience Studies (COVES) presents early findings from the first year and a half of work. Come see what we've begun to uncover, offer suggestions for future analyses, and help guide our first-ever field-wide report. More information on the project will be available.

▶ Poster 42

**Features of Museum Outreach Activities That Can Support Children’s Interest in and Understanding of Scientific Practices and Careers**

*Camellia Sanford-Dolly and Alison Allen, Rockman et al*

This poster highlights a national science-based museum outreach program, GSK Science in the Summer. External evaluators, Rockman et al, investigate whether the program impacted participating youth’s interest in and understanding of science practices and careers. Features of outreach activities that support or hinder children’s engagement with science are identified.

▶ Poster 43

**EiE Spy With My Little Eye: K-1 Elementary Engineering Evaluation**

*Rebekah Isaak, Gretchen Haupt, and Juan Dominguez, Science Museum of Minnesota*

Do you spy the impacts of hands-on engineering activities in K-1 students? This poster depicts the bright triumphs and bumpy challenges involved in weaving the tapestry of tales of K-1 students’ engagement in engineering activities through analysis of classroom observations and thoughtful reflection from teachers and evaluators.

▶ Poster 44

**Parental Influences in Computational Thinking of Children during an Engineering Design Task**

*Hoda Ehsan, Tikyna Dandridge and Monica Cardella, Purdue University*

In this study we explored the computational thinking exhibited by five families with K-2 aged children as they engaged in an engineering activity at a Midwestern science center. Video recordings revealed that parents influence children’s computation thinking the most when they verbally solicit information from children.

▶ Poster 45

**Exploring Audience Perceptions of Terminology at Woodland Park Zoo & Seattle Aquarium**

*Claire Bennett, Emma Cantrell, and Jenny Fisher, University of Washington*

Scientific organizations often rely on scientific jargon in audience communication. This study sought to understand perceptions and emotional responses to common words used in living collections. Both online and onsite audiences at Woodland Park Zoo and Seattle Aquarium were included to explore a wide breadth of audience engagement.

▶ Poster 46

**Demonstrations**

*Kelly Velasquez and Manda Smith, Lincoln Park Zoo*

This project evaluated the main message that visitors were taking away from the daily animal enrichment and training demonstrations Lincoln Park Zoo offers, and what action they would take or behavior they would change in order to protect wildlife.

▶ Poster 47

**Core Samples: Unearthing Complex Stakeholder Values of Evaluation**

*Jeremy W. Foutz, STEAM Workgroup*

Conducted by STEAM Workgroup on behalf of the Indianapolis Consortium on Audience Research and Evaluation (ICARE), this study uses Q methodology to explore the primary factors at play in how staff stakeholders at local museums and zoos construct their value(s) of evaluation.



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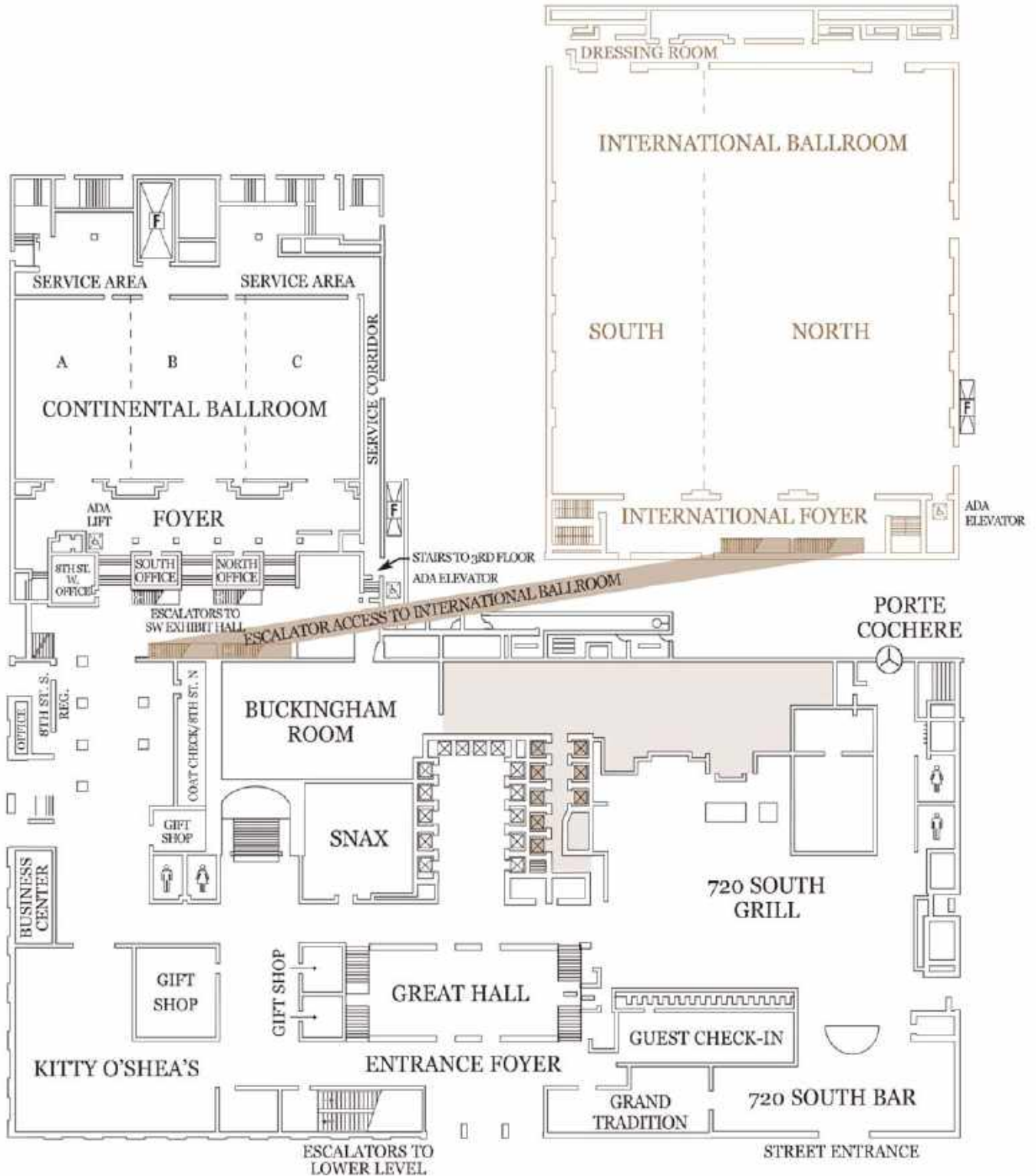


Rockman et al  
Research & Evaluation

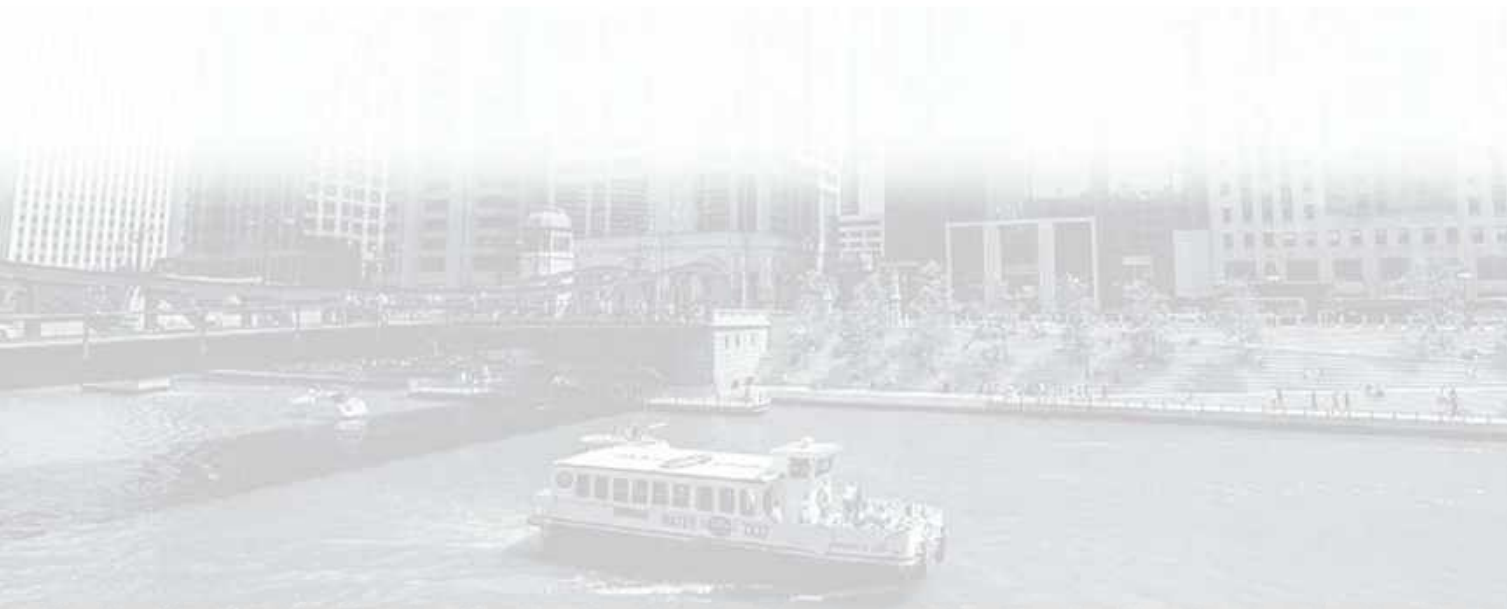
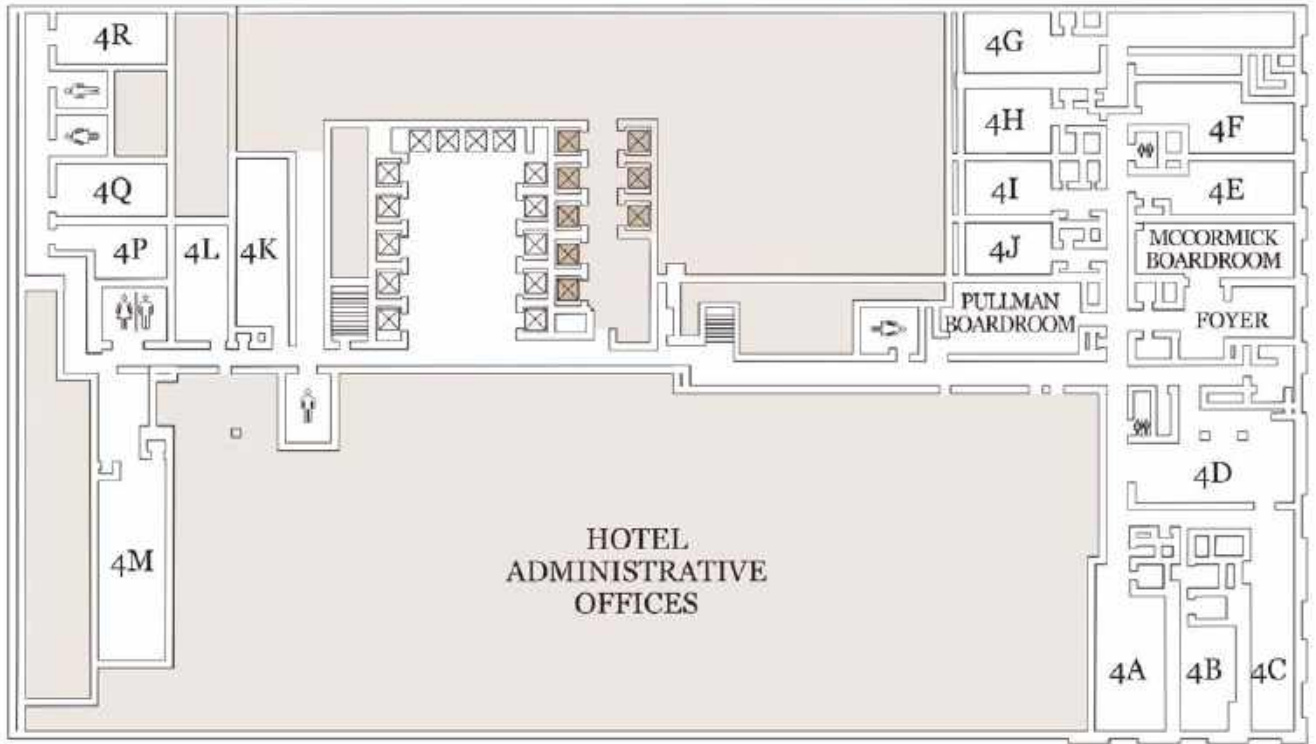




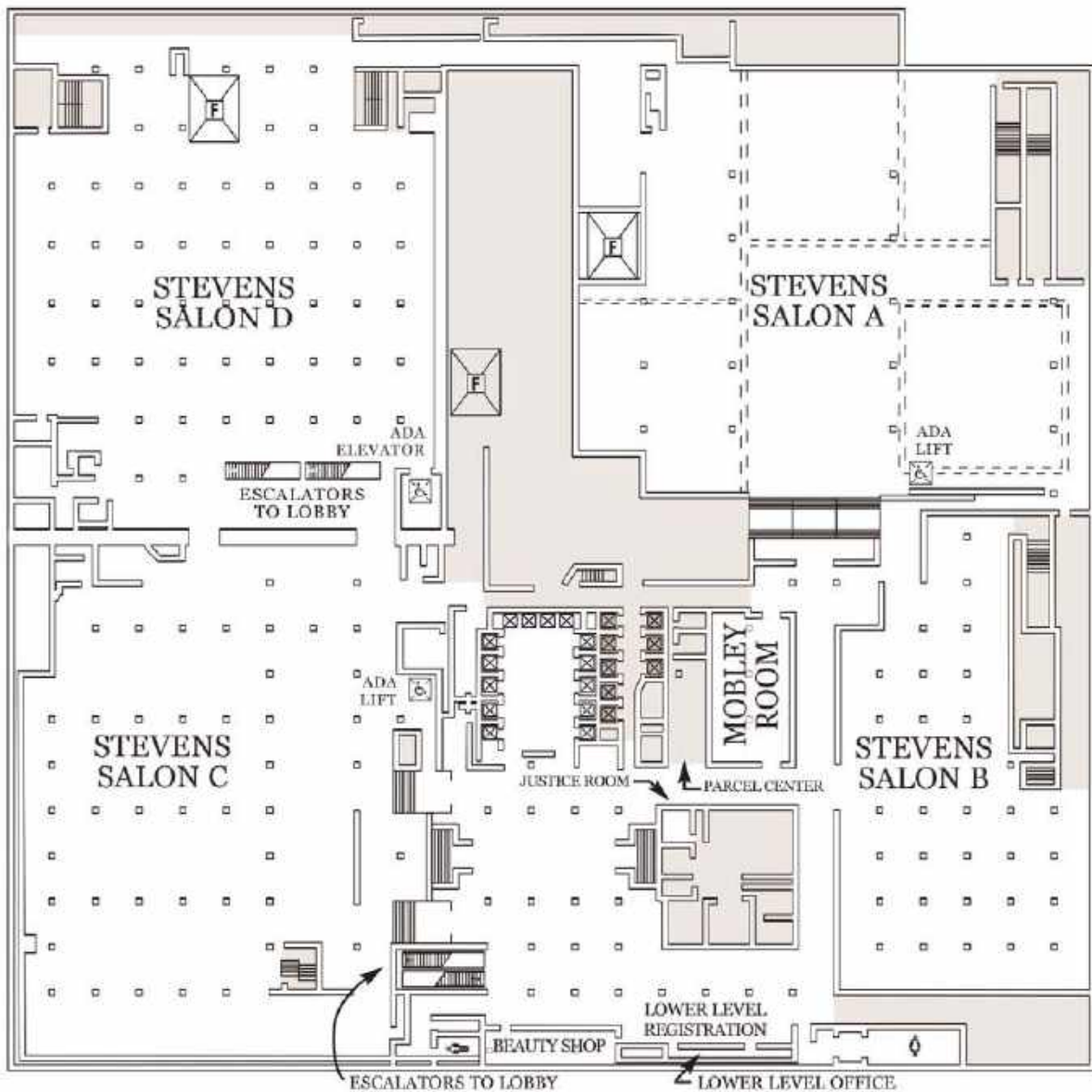
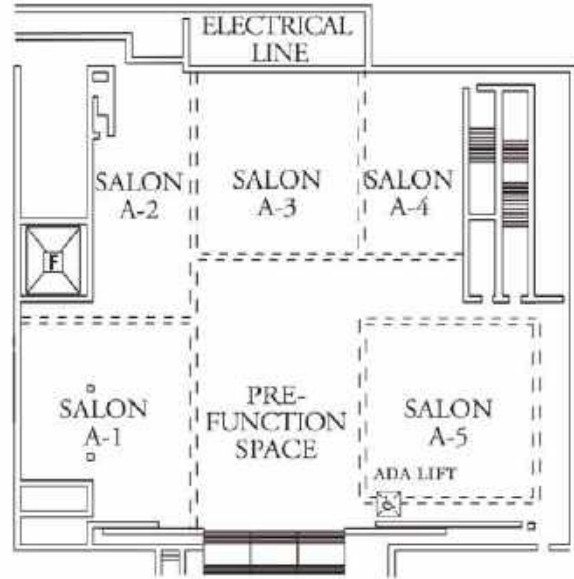
## HOTEL - LOBBY LEVEL



## HOTEL - FOURTH FLOOR



## HOTEL - LOWER LEVEL





## Museums Offering Free Admission to Conference Attendees

Stop by one of these amazing museums or informal learning institutions during your stay - just show your Conference badge for admission!

- Art Institute of Chicago-Free Thursday
- Block Museum of Art
- Brookfield Zoo-Free Thursday
- Busy Beaver Button Museum
- Catigny
- Chicago Botanic Garden
- Chicago Cultural Center
- Chicago Design Museum
- Clarke House Museum
- DePaul Art Museum
- Dupage Historical Museum
- Elmhurst Historical Museum
- Garfield Park Conservatory
- Glessner House Museum-Free Wednesday
- International Museum of Surgical Science
- Intuit: The Center for Intuitive and Outsider Art-with VSA Badge
- Jane Addams Hull-House Museum
- Jurica-Suchy Nature Museum
- Lincoln Park Zoo
- Lizzardo Museum of Lapidary Art-Free Friday
- Money Museum
- Museum of Contemporary Photography
- Museum of Science and Industry-with VSA Badge
- National Museum of Mexican Art
- National Museum of Puerto Rican Arts and Culture
- National Museum of the American Sailor
- National Veterans Art Museum
- Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago
- Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum
- Robert McCormick Museum and First Division Museum
- Shedd Aquarium - with VSA badge
- Smart Museum of Art
- The Grove
- Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art
- Wagner Farm







# ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S MUSEUMS

ACM is a community of more than 300 member museums all over the world, sharing the same vision: a world that honors all children. We're on our way to make this vision our reality.

## Let's go!

### Strategic Roadmap

#### Our Vision

A world that honors all children and respects the diverse ways in which they learn and develop.

Build Capacity and Support Excellence of Children's Museums

Promote and Champion Children's Museums

Build our members' capacity to proactively respond to critical issues

Nurture talent and leadership in the children's museum workforce

Bolster positive public perception of children's museums

Articulate and communicate field identity

Connect our members with current research and evidence to inform practice

Facilitate and strengthen partnerships between our members and other organizations.

Support high-quality operations across programs, service, and design

Promote attendance and engagement of children's museums

#### Our Mission

ACM champions children's museums worldwide.

Increase media visibility of children's museums and ACM

Join us next year in Denver from May 8-11 for InterActivity 2019: FearLESS

Learn more at [www.ChildrensMuseums.org](http://www.ChildrensMuseums.org)